



Jacob Jones &lt;whitmancowatch@gmail.com&gt;

---

## Lawsuit

---

Christine Mikalson <[REDACTED]>  
To: "whitmancowatch@gmail.com" <whitmancowatch@gmail.com>

Mon, May 6, 2019 at 3:34 PM

Dear Jacob. Sorry this took me a while. I truly suffer PTSD from my work experience. I cried and cried writing this. I hope this helps you in your quest for the truth  
Christine Mikalson

I worked in the Whitman County Auditor's office for 23 years. I took pride in that role, and I always believed that it was critical for the Auditor to remain absolutely free from partisan politics to ensure that voters have confidence in the integrity of our democratic election process. Starting in about 2004, I witnessed events regarding the handling of ballots in the Whitman County auditor's office that seemed to me to fall short of our highest ethical standards, so I felt I had no choice but to "blow the whistle".

From that point forward, my working life became unbearable. I have two daughters who are adults but disabled with chronic autoimmune conditions. I also have a serious health condition.

My employer decided that it was "her duty" to prove to the citizens of Whitman County that my children and I were not disabled and that in spite of properly signed FMLA certifications from health care providers, she knew better and would prove that I was a "liar" and my children were not sick.

I cared deeply about my job but I also knew that my daughters health had to come first, so I exercised my legal right to take FMLA leave. Whenever I did that, I felt that there were negative consequences at work, and that I was being forced to choose between my job and my children.

If I didn't return to work and continued at the doctor, there was the "sit down." I was called into the office and told to "sit DOWN!!!" I remember being called and treated like "A dog, a child, disgusting, repugnant, disturbed, and mentally unstable."

I took my concerns to every higher authority available to me but that only led to more pressure.

I had planned to retire at age 70 in order to maximize my social security, but in the end, I just couldn't bear it any more. The years and years of criticism, cruelty, and vilification became unbearable. My health declined. I had spent years searching for answers for my daughters' autoimmune conditions only to face more pressure at work.

In the end, I was filled with frustration and fear. I was so close to answers but was essentially told to choose between my children and my job. I was someone who needed the support that FMLA was designed to provide, but sadly it was not available for me without a cost when I returned to work.

County wages barely provide a living wage and making ends meet for myself and my daughters was always a struggle. But it's important to know I did not file this lawsuit in a quest for wealth. My goal was never money. I had hope for change. Hope that I would receive an apology or at least an admission of wrong doing after years of abuse. I had also filed the suit in spiritual partnership with every other County employee who witnessed wrong and requested for right. What I got instead

was being told that if I took the case to trial, I could expect to be further damaged. So, I decided to settle. I was tired, weary, and worn out and so were my children. My share of the settlement less taxes amounted to about \$35,000-- enough to take my daughters to those clinics in Seattle like I should have done years ago. If I had been given a choice, I never would have chosen to suffer through what my family and I endured for that amount of money.

I want the citizens to know I tried. I tried to be a guardian. I was always happy to be a true public servant. And I thank you for being there for me on those days when it was unbearable. Your kindness and friendship is and was my salvation. Thank you for allowing me to serve. Remember that "the devil is in the details" and to always be vigilant and hold accountable those in power. Thank you too to our ever watchful guardians of the press for their unrelenting vigilance.

Sent from my iPhone